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PEARY'S PROGRESS TO THE POLE.

A LECTURE BEFORE THE SOCIETY ON TUESDAY EVENING, NOV. 19, AT MENDELSSOHN HALL, BY HERBERT L. BRIDGMAN, SECRETARY OF THE PEARY ARCTIC CLUB AND IN COMMAND OF THE *Diana*, 1899, AND *Erik*, 1901, EXPEDITIONS. THE LECTURE WAS FULLY ILLUSTRATED BY STEREOPTICON VIEWS FROM NEW PHOTOGRAPHS, AND THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF ITS MORE IMPORTANT FEATURES:

The rôle which falls to me this evening, ladies and gentlemen, is very simple and very old. Indeed, were I in a church, I might imitate the preacher and say, "You will find my text in such a chapter and verse," but, perhaps, as you may, like myself, be a little out of practice, I may make myself more easily understood by simply saying that I am a sort of herald come out of the North, forerunner of a man who, having already high honours and distinctions, will come, next year, to us deserving still greater praise, and bringing the great geographical prize of the centuries.

The situation, at the time of the departure of the *Erik*, on the 14th of last July, was, briefly, that two years, or, rather, two full seasons for Arctic work, had elapsed since anything had been heard from Lieut. Peary, and that an entire year had passed since the *Windward*, with Mrs. Peary and Miss Peary on board, sailed for the North, with the incidental knowledge that two years had also passed since any word had been heard from Sverdrup's Norwegian *Fram*. What had been the fate of these three expeditions? Whether all had gone well, or whether disaster had overtaken either, it was our business, if possible, to go and find out. Our destination, by common understanding, was Etah, Peary's North Greenland headquarters, where we of the *Diana* bade him farewell on that gray August morning in 1899, when we came down Foulke Fjord with flags flying and red lights burning, while the explorer and his little band of native allies from the rocks answered our cheers.

Leaving Sydney, the *Erik* dropped anchor next day at Port-au-Basque, Newfoundland, where, after three days' delay, our complement of men from St. Johns was obtained, and putting immediately to sea, we rounded Cape Ray Light at midnight of July 17. One fine day and another of head-winds brought us in the Straits of Belle Isle into the ice, much more to the south than any Arctic

ship since Peary's first *Kite*, in 1891, had met it, cutting off completely our hope of a Labrador port, and driving us far out to the eastward toward the middle of Davis Strait. Here we encountered the East Greenland stream, coming around Cape Farewell, driving us again to the north, so that with the worst of weather all the time we finally dropped anchor late on Saturday evening, July 29, in the little harbour of Disko Fjord.

The next morning being fine, we retraced our course to Godhavn, where Governor Nilsen informed us that they had no news of either Peary's or Sverdrup's ship, but that in March a steamer heading north had been seen far out in Davis Strait—which we all agreed might possibly have been the missing *Fram*. Remaining less than twenty-four hours in Godhavn, we were under way early on Monday, arriving on Wednesday at Upernavik, where Inspector Jansen and Governor Knauth greeted us, with no more information of Peary, and pushing at once into the ice of Melville Bay, after three days we woke, at midnight of Friday, August 2, with blasts of our whistle, the native settlement at Cape York. Taking on board a party of natives, we proceeded through the open north water, and at 6 o'clock on the evening of Sunday, August 4, had the satisfaction of dropping anchor alongside of the *Windward* in Foulke Fjord, under the rocky cliffs of Etah.

We found on the *Windward* the Peary family, Surgeon Dedrick, and Capt. Bartlett, with all the ship's company, all in perfect health and with an exceedingly interesting story of the experiences since they had been heard from. Lieut. Peary delivered in person the telegram and letters, of which copies follow, left by him with Surgeon Dedrick at Fort Conger in April last upon his departure for the North, with the expectation that the Doctor would bring them South and deliver them before Peary should return.

The telegram, published for the first time, is as follows:

U. S. Consul—Kindly cable immediately

PEARY.

CONGER, April 4, 1901.

BRIDGMAN,

Standard Union,

New York.

May, 1900, rounded north end Greenland 83 degrees 39 minutes. Down east coast to 83 degrees. North to 83 degrees 50 minutes. Stopped by broken pack. Wintered Conger. No news ship. Now starting North via Cape Hecla, Henson, one Eskimo. Doctor Dedrick remainder party going south find ship. All well. Letter.

PEARY.

* The letter to the secretary of the club read:

CONGER, April 4, 1901.

MY DEAR BRIDGMAN:

It gives me great pleasure to present to the Club the results of the work of 1900.

First—The rounding of the northern limit of the Greenland Archipelago, the most northerly known land in the world, probably the most northerly land.

Second—The highest latitude yet attained in the Western Hemisphere (83 degrees 50 north).

Third—The determination of the origin of the so-called paleocrystic ice (floe berg), etc., etc.

Considering that I am an old man, have one broken leg and only three toes, and that my starting point was Etah, I feel that this was doing tolerably well. It is almost 1,000 years since Eric the Red first sighted the southern extremity of the archipelago, and from that time Norwegians, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, Englishmen, Scotchmen and Americans have crept gradually northward up its shores until at last, through the instrumentality and liberality of the Club, its northern cape has been lifted out of the Arctic mists, and obscurity. It seems fitting that this event, characterized by Sir Clements Markham as second in importance only to the attainment of the Pole itself, should fall in the closing year of the century. If I do not capture the Pole itself in this spring campaign I shall try it again next spring.

My gratitude and respects to all the members of the Club. Always most sincerely,

PEARY.

The fuller report to the Club of the work of the expedition was in these words:

CONGER, April 4, 1901.

DEAR SIR:

After sending back the two natives from C. Britannia (C. North) May 4, 1900, I continued north along the Greenland coast with Henson and one Eskimo.

Lockwood's Farthest was reached May 8, and his record taken for the archives of the Club.

Cape Washington was reached on the next march, and the northern extremity of the Greenland archipelago, May 13, N. lat. 83:39 W. long. 33:20.

No land visible northward, but a water sky in the distance, as over a broad lead or pool.

From here proceeded due North to N. lat. 83:50, where I was stopped by disintegrated pack. Water sky not far distant.

Returning to north point of land proceeded eastward and southeastward down the east coast to 83 N. lat. (approx.) W. long. 25 (approx.). Stopped here by dense fog and severe storm. Fog continued for ten days.

Returning, Conger was reached June 10. Open water at Black Cape, Black Horn Cliffs, Cape Brevoort and Cape Sumner rendered our progress at times precarious.

Cairns and records were left in the highest known land in the globe, at the farthest known land on the east coast, and at Cape Washington.

Ten musk-oxen, one bear, one hare, were killed near the extreme northern point of the land. Thirty-two other musk-oxen, one wolf, several seals, two fresh bear tracks, and numerous ptarmigan were seen during the journey.

So-called paleocrystic ice, floe-bergs, etc., were observed in process of formation along the north coast.

During my absence Dr. Dedrick and the Eskimos had secured some thirty-three musk-oxen and ten seals in the vicinity of Conger; had established small caches for my return at Thank-God Harbor, Cape Lieber and Lincoln Bay, and had brought up sugar, milk and tea from the various caches between Conger and Cape Louis Napoleon.

July was passed by Dr. Dedrick with a portion of the Eskimos in the region from Discovery Harbor westward, via Black Rock Vale to Lake Hazen, where he secured over forty musk-oxen.

During August and early in September various other hunting trips of shorter duration were made, resulting in the killing of some twenty musk-oxen.

The middle of September I started with a party for Lake Hazen region to secure musk-oxen for our winter supply, it being evident that no ship would reach us. Going west as far as the valley of the Very River by Oct. 4, ninety-two musk-oxen had been killed. Later nine more were secured, making a total of 101 for the autumn hunting.

From the beginning of November to March 6 a large portion of the time was passed by the party in igloos built in the vicinity of the game killed in various localities from Discovery Harbor to Ruggles River.

In February Dr. Dedrick, starting on his way to the meat at Very River, was successful in killing nineteen musk-oxen at Ruggles River, rendering it unnecessary for him to go to Very River.

One of the Eskimo women died Jan. 13, and Henson showed symptoms of scurvy at the same time.

On the reassembling of the entire party at Conger March 6 (Dr. Dedrick had been living in the igloos since Jan. 2) the doctor pronounced every one showing symptoms of anæmia. This delayed my departure, which I had hoped would take place March 15.

March 19 I started for Ruggles River, returning to Conger March 22, with meat. March 25 Dr. Dedrick left to hunt musk-oxen in the vicinity of C. Beechy and Wrangle B., for use of my northern party. He returned April 1, having seen tracks only of the animals.

I start to-morrow with Henson and one Eskimo and twenty-four dogs for C. Hecla, or some favorable point in that neighborhood, from which I shall attempt to push north over the polar pack as far as possible. Dr. Dedrick at the same time starts south with the rest of the party to communicate with the ship.

On my return to Conger from the north I expect to follow him south, join the ship, and make every effort to push her as far north as practicable the coming summer. If disaster has overtaken the ship in her efforts to get north last season, I expect from D'Urville and Sabine as a base to devote my time next fall to work on the west side of Grinnell land, and it is quite possible that I may go north next spring along the west shore of that land on a route parallel to the now well-beaten Smith Sound group.

In continuation of my letter to you from Conger April 5 I note as follows:

April 5 I left Conger with Henson, one Eskimo, two sledges and twelve dogs for my northern trip. On reaching Lincoln Bay it was evident to me that the condition of men and dogs was such as to negative the possibility of reaching the Pole, and I reluctantly turned back.

Arriving at Conger, after an absence of eight days, I found the doctor and his party there. Leaving Conger the same time as I with six Eskimos, two sledges and

seven dogs and pups, in an attempt to communicate with or obtain news of the ship, the character of the traveling had obliged him to return before reaching Cape Lieber.

Fortunately the night before I arrived one of the Eskimos secured several musk-oxen above St. Patrick's Bay, which enabled me to feed my dogs before starting south, which I did with the entire party on the 17th.

April 30 at Hayes Point, I met the party from the *Windward* attempting to reach Conger, and received my mail, learning that the *Windward* was at Payer Harbor. After a rest at the D'Urville box house, I went on to the *Windward*, arriving May 6.

Dr. Dedrick remained at D'Urville with the dogs and two of the men from the *Windward* to transport supplies up the coast for the next winter's campaign.

After nine days' rest at the ship Henson started with five sledges to get the pemmican to Conger and return before the ice broke up.

May 22 Dr. Dedrick reached the ship. The transportation of supplies, principally dog food, to D'Urville, was continued to the middle of June, when everything then available was removed from Payer Harbor.

Henson established a cache of pemmican at Cape Defosse, but was unable to reach Conger on account of deep snow.

During June work was carried on upon the winter quarters, the *Windward's* deck house being transferred to the shore for that purpose, it being my purpose to utilize the Stein house for quarters for my Eskimos.

July 3, after several days' sawing, the *Windward* was freed from the ice, and at once steamed across to Littleton Island, where the Fourth was devoted to duck shooting. After this she proceeded to Whale Sound to hunt for walrus, 128 of these animals being killed and landed at Payer Harbor, but previous to the arrival of the *Erik*.

The subsequent movements of the ship are familiar to you, and do not need to be noted here.

Very sincerely,

H. L. BRIDGMAN,

Secretary,

Peary Arctic Club,

N. Y. City.

R. E. PEARY, U. S. N.

During the three weeks that followed, the work of the spring of 1900 was often recurred to, and many interesting facts and deductions were added by Lieut. Peary to his first statements. In his judgment, the journey demonstrates the termination of land, and eliminates completely Greenland from the Arctic problem. From the farthest North, 83:27, the coast to the east changes, and in place of the high, precipitous cliffs and deep fjords is a low, rolling foreshore, evidently the principal coast of the North. Lieut. Peary pointed out a very striking similarity between the coast to the east and to the west of Lincoln Sea, the characteristics of Cape Hecla being almost identical with those to the northern point and east, while those to the west of Cape Hecla are almost duplicated by those to the east of the point, running completely around to Independence Bay.

The story of Mrs. Peary's winter in the *Windward* was equally

interesting, though less important from a strictly geographical and scientific point of view. Reaching Etah late in August, 1900, Peary's orders to cross Smith Sound and proceed as far north as possible were found, and every effort was made to follow them. The ship was, however, beset by ice at Cape Sabine, and further progress made impossible. Winter quarters were established in Payer Harbor, and here for eight months Mrs. Peary and Miss Peary remained, ice-bound, imprisoned on the *Windward*, yet passing the winter with a fair degree of comfort. Miss Peary played on shore in the open air every day with her Eskimo comrades, and three unsuccessful efforts were made to reach Fort Conger and effect, if possible, a junction with Lieut. Peary. The last was successful to the extent that, coming south, Peary met the party April 30, 1901, at Cape Hayes, and pushing on, reached the *Windward* at 3 o'clock on the morning of May 6, his birthday. The *Windward*, with the aid of saws, freed herself from the ice July 3, her deck-house having previously been landed to serve as headquarters during the winter of 1901-02; and during July Peary had killed in Inglefield Gulf 125 walrus for dog-food for the next campaign, all of which had been successfully landed at Cape Sabine the week before the arrival of the *Erik*.

With the two ships in commission, the walrus hunt was resumed for a week, when Lieut. Peary, taking the *Erik*, proceeded to Cape York, and later made a round of all the native settlements, collecting dogs, skins, and equipment for the campaign of the spring of 1902. The hunting party in the meantime, in a deer-hunt on the promontory between Oliks and Academy Bays, captured thirty fine animals, whose skin and flesh were of the greatest service to Lieut. Peary.

The *Erik* returned to Etah, and having on board all of the fruits of the three weeks' walrus and deer hunts, and of the trading expedition with the natives, left Etah on Saturday night, August 24, for Peary's headquarters at Cape Sabine, only 23 miles distant. After a persistent but fruitless struggle with the ice, it was obliged to land Mr. Peary and his party in a temporary camp on the south side of Herschel Bay on Thursday, August 29. Here Lieut. Peary proposed to remain until the ice should either permit him to go in his boats ten miles north to his headquarters at Cape Sabine or until it should be frozen sufficiently to enable him to go over its surface to the same destination. In either event he was likely to be comfortably established for the winter within a month at the furthest from the departure of the steamer. The *Erik* crossed

Smith Sound with no great difficulty, and completed her voyage at Sydney, C. B., September 13, being followed by the *Windward*, with Messrs. Robert Stein and Samuel Warmbath, of the Ellesmere Land Expedition, which arrived at Brigus, N. F., September 29.

Lieut. Peary expected to devote the autumn of 1901 to the musk-ox hunt and to exploration of the western portions of Grinnell Land, which would occupy him as long as the light continued. It is quite within bounds that he may find Eskimos who have never yet been seen by white men, and an encouraging presage of that was the unmistakable indications of a former settlement on the site of his temporary camp on the south side of Herschel Bay. Mr. Peary is abundantly supplied with the best dog-food, and will undoubtedly have, when taking the field in the spring, the largest and best pack of dogs which he has ever had. Seventy are now with him, and the natives who will visit him as soon as the light returns will doubtless bring others. It is his clearly-defined and declared purpose to proceed along the coast from Fort Conger to Cape Hecla, and thence to lay a course directly and in an air-line over the sea-ice for the Pole.

As to the final outcome, Peary's own words are: "Given a favorable season next year, I regard myself in better shape for the realization of my plans than I have been any previous year of my stay here."